

Message Text

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13-12

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 IO-11 ISO-00 CPR-01 PM-04 SAM-01 NSC-05

USIA-06 OPR-02 PA-01 PRS-01 SS-15 SY-05 A-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 SP-02 USSS-00 /074 W

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R 170927Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY MASERU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5459

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

INFO AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MASERU 0048

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LT, US, UN

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER'S REQUEST FOR MEETING WITH PRESIDENT FORD

REF: (A) 75 MASERU 281, (B) MASERU 0039

1. FOREIGN MINISTER MOLAPO INFORMED ME DURING A MEETING ON JAN 16 THAT PRIME MINISTER JONATHAN PLANS TO ATTEND THE 31ST UNGA AND WOULD LIKE VERY MUCH TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT FORD. MOLAPO REQUESTED THAT THE DEPARTMENT ARRANGE SUCH A MEETING. FONMIN STATED THE GOL REALIZED THE PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE WOULD BE VERY BUSY BUT A BRIEF MEETING WITH PRESIDENT FORD WOULD BE VERY MUCH APPRECIATED BY THE GOL AND HELPFUL TO US-LESOTHO RELATIONS. MOLAPO ADDED THAT PRIME MINISTER JONATHAN WOULD BE PREPARED TO ADDRESS PUBLIC MEETINGS DURING A VISIT TO WASHINGTON.

2. I TOLD THE FOREIGN MINISTER THAT GOL REQUEST FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT FORD WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO WASHINGTON FOR ITS CONSIDERATION.

3. COMMENT: PRIME MINISTER HAS IN PAST EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT. I RECOMMEND THAT THE PRESIDENT MEET
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WITH HIM BRIEFLY. SUCH A MEETING WOULD SERVE OVERALL U.S.

INTEREST IN AFRICA AND DEMONSTRATE OUR APPRECIATION FOR LESOTHO'S FIRM AND CONSISTENT SUPPORT ON UN ITEMS OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE TO US. A POSITIVE RESPONSE WOULD ENHANCE OUR ACCESS TO TOP OFFICIALS AND SUBSTANTIALLY STRENGTHEN OUR EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN LESOTHO'S UN SUPPORT ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. IT WOULD MAKE CLEAR TO OTHER AFRICAN STATES THAT THERE IS INDEED A REWARD FOR SUPPORTING THE U.S. ON UN ITEMS. ALSO IMPORTANT TO DEMONSTRATE OUR SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT FOR SMALL, MODERATE, NON-RACIAL STATE THAT FEELS ISOLATED AND VULNERABLE TO SOUTH AFRICAN PRESSURES.

4. A NEGATIVE RESPONSE TO PRIME MINISTER'S REQUEST WOULD BE TAKEN AS A SIGN OF INGRATITUDE FOR LESOTHO'S PRO-WESTERN FOREIGN POSTURE AND GREATLY STRENGTHEN THOSE ELEMENTS IN GOVERNMENT THAT WANT TO DEMONSTRATE SOLIDARITY WITH OAU AND NON-ALIGNED RADICAL GROUP. PRIME MINISTER PROBABLY WANTS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT AS ASSURANCE THAT LESOTHO HAS NOT FOREGONE SOLIDARITY WITH OAU/NON-ALIGNED IN VAIN HOPE OF CLOSER TIES WITH U.S. AND WESTERN COUNTRIES.

5. I APPRECIATE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN ARRANGING MEETING WITH PRESIDENT DURING ELECTION YEAR BUT REQUEST AUTHORITY TO INFORM PRIME MINISTER THAT WASHINGTON AGREES IN PRINCIPLE AND EVERY EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO ARRANGE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT.

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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